

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. *The author of this Epistle.*

LITTLE is known of the author of this brief epistle. He styles himself (ver. 1) 'the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James;' but there has been some difference of opinion as to what *James* is meant. He does not call himself an *apostle*, but supposes that the terms which he uses would sufficiently identify him, and would be a sufficient reason for his addressing his brethren in the manner in which he does in this epistle. There were two of the name of *James* among the apostles, (Luke vi. 14, 15 ;) and it has been made a question of which of them he was the brother. There were also two of the name of Judas, or Jude ; but there is no difficulty in determining which of them was the author of this epistle, for the other had the surname of Iscariot, and was the traitor. In the catalogue of the apostles given by Matthew, (chap. x. 3,) the tenth place is given to an apostle who is there called 'Lebbeus,' whose surname was 'Thaddeus;' and as this name does not occur in the list given by Luke, (chap. vi. 15,) and as the tenth place in the catalogue is occupied by 'Simon, called Zelotes,' and as he afterwards mentions 'Judas the brother of James,' it is supposed that Lebbeus and Judas were the same persons. It was not uncommon for persons to have two or more names. Comp. Robinson's Harmony of the Gospels, § 40 ; Bacon's Lives of Apostles, p. 447 ; and Michaelis, iv., 365.

The title which he assumes, 'brother of James,' was evidently chosen because the James referred to was well-known, and because the fact that he was his brother would be a sufficient designation of himself, and of his right to address Christians in this manner. The name of the elder James, who was slain by Herod, (Acts xii. 2,) can hardly be supposed to be referred to, as he had been dead some time when this epistle is supposed to have been written ; and as that James was the brother of John, who was then living, it would have been much more natural for him to have mentioned that he was the brother of that beloved disciple. The other James—'James the Less,' or 'James the Just'—was still living ; was a prominent man in Jerusalem ; and was, besides, known as 'the brother of the Lord Jesus;' and the fact of relationship to that James would sufficiently designate the writer. There can be little doubt, therefore, that this is the James here intended. In regard to his character and influence, see Intro. to the Epistle of James, § 1. If the author of this epistle was the brother of *that* James, it was sufficient to refer to that fact, without mentioning that he was an apostle, in order to give to his epistle authority, and to settle its canonical character.

Of Jude little is known. His name is found in the list of the apostles, but, besides that, it is but once mentioned in the Gospels. The only thing that is preserved of him in the Evangelists, is a question which he put to the Saviour, on the eve of his crucifixion. The Saviour had said, in his parting address to his disciples, 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that

loveth me ; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father ; and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.' In regard to the meaning of this remark, Judas is said to have asked the following question : ' Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world ? ' John xiv. 21, 22. To this question the Saviour gave him a kind and satisfactory answer, and that is the last that is said of him in the Gospels.

Of his subsequent life we know little. In Acts xv. 22, he is mentioned as surnamed ' Barsabas,' and as being sent with Paul and Barnabas and Silas to Antioch. Paulinus says that he preached in Lybia, and that his body remained there. Jerome affirms, that after the ascension he was sent to Edessa, to king Abgarus ; and the modern Greeks say that he preached in that city, and throughout Mesopotamia, and in Judea, Samaria, Idumea, Syria, and principally in Armenia and Persia.—*Calmet's Dict.* Nothing certainly can be known in reference to the field of his labours, or to the place and circumstances of his death. On the question whether the Thaddeus who first preached the gospel in Syria was the same person as Jude, see Michaelis, Intro. iv., 367–371.

§ 2. *The authenticity of the Epistle.*

If this epistle was written by the apostle Jude, the brother of James and of our Lord, there can be no doubt of its canonical authority, and its claim to a place in the New Testament. It is true that he does not call himself an apostle, but simply mentions himself as ' a servant of Jesus Christ, and a brother of James.' By this appellation, however, he has practically made it known that he was one of the apostles, for all who had a catalogue of the apostles would know ' that Judas, the brother of James,' was one of them. At the same time, as the relation of James to our Lord was well understood, (Gal. i. 19,) his authority would be recognized as soon as he was known to be the author of the epistle. It may be asked, indeed, if he was an apostle, why he did not call himself such ; and why he did not seek to give authority and currency to his epistle, by advertising to the fact that he was the ' Lord's brother.' To the first of these questions, it may be replied, that to have called himself ' Judas, the apostle,' would not have designated him so certainly, as to call himself ' the brother of James ;' and besides, the naked title, ' Judas, the apostle,' was one which he might not choose to see applied to himself. After the act of the traitor, and the reproach which he had brought upon that name, it is probable that he would prefer to designate himself by some other appellation than one which had such associations connected with it. It may be added, also, that in several of his epistles Paul himself does not make use of the name of the apostle, Phil. i. 1 ; 1 Thess. i. 1 ; 2 Thess. i. 1 ; Philemon 1. To the second question, it may be replied, that *modesty* may have kept him from applying to himself the title, the ' Lord's brother.' Even James never uses it of himself ; and we only know that he sustained this relation from an incidental remark of the apostle Paul, Gal. i. 19. Great honour would be attached to that relationship, and it is possible that the reason why it was not referred to by James and Jude was an apprehension that it might produce jealousy, as if they claimed some special pre-eminence over their brethren.

For the evidence of the canonical authority of this epistle, the reader is referred to Lardner, vol. vi., pp. 304–313, and to Michaelis, Intro. vol. iv., p. 374, seq. Michaelis, chiefly on the internal evidence, supposes that it is not an inspired production. There were indeed, at first, doubts about its being inspired, as there were respecting the epistle of James, and the second epistle of Peter, but those doubts were ultimately removed, and it was received as a canonical epistle. Clemens of Alexandria cites the epistle under Jude's name, as the production of a prophetic mind. Origen calls it a production full of heavenly grace. Eusebius says that his predecessors were divided in opinion respecting it, and that it was not ranked among the universally acknowledged writings. It was not uni-

versally received among the Syrians, and is not found in the Peschito, the oldest Syriac version of the Scriptures. In the time of Jerome, however, it came to be ranked among the other sacred Scriptures as of Divine authority.—Hug, Intro., § 180.

The principal ground of doubt in regard to the canonical authority of the epistle, arose from the supposed fact that the author has quoted two apocryphal writings, vers. 9, 14. The consideration of this objection will be more appropriate in the Notes on those verses, for it obviously depends much on the true interpretation of these passages. I shall, therefore, reserve what I have to say on that point to the exposition of those verses. Those who are disposed to examine it at length, may consult Hug, Intro., § 183; Lardner, vi. 309–314, and Michaelis, Intro., iv., 378, seq.

§ 3. *The question when the Epistle was written, to whom, and its design.*

Nothing can be determined with entire certainty in regard to the persons to whom this epistle was written. Witsius supposed that it was addressed to Christians everywhere; Hammond, that it was addressed to Jewish Christians alone, who were scattered abroad, and that its design was to secure them against the errors of the Gnostics; Benson, that it was directed to Jewish believers, especially to those of the western dispersion; Lardner, that it was written to all, without distinction, who had embraced the gospel. The principal argument for supposing that it was addressed to Jewish converts is, that the apostle refers mainly for proof to Hebrew writings, but this might be sufficiently accounted for by the fact that the writer himself was of Jewish origin.

The only way of determining anything on this point is from the epistle itself. The inscription is, 'To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called,' ver. 1. From this it would appear evident that he had no *particular* classes of Christians in his eye, whether of Jewish or Gentile origin, but that he designed the epistle for the general use of all who had embraced the Christian religion. The errors which he combats in the epistle were evidently wide-spread, and were of such a nature that it was proper to warn all Christians against them. They might, it is true, be more prevalent in some quarters than in others, but still they were so common that Christians everywhere should be put on their guard against them.

The *design* for which Jude wrote the epistle he has himself stated, ver. 3. It was with reference to the 'common salvation'—the doctrines pertaining to salvation which were held by *all* Christians, and to show them the reasons for 'contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.' That faith was assailed. There were teachers of error abroad. They were insinuating and artful men—men who had crept in unawares, and who, while they professed to hold the Christian doctrine, were really undermining its faith, and spreading corruption through the church. The *purpose*, therefore, of the epistle is to put those to whom it was written on their guard against the corrupt teachings of these men, and to encourage them to stand up manfully for the great principles of Christian truth.

Who these errorists were, it is not easy now to determine. The leading charge against them, both by Jude and Peter, (2 Peter ii. 1.) is, that they denied our Lord, (ver. 4;) and yet it is said that they were numbered among Christians, and were found in their assemblies, 2 Peter ii. 13; Jude, ver. 12. By this denial, however, we are not to suppose that they literally and professedly denied that Jesus was the Christ, but that they held *doctrines* which amounted to a denial of him in fact. Comp. Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 1. For the general characteristics of these teachers, see Intro. to 2 Pet. § 4.

At this distance of time, and with our imperfect knowledge of the characteristics of the early erroneous sects in the church, it is difficult to determine pre-

cisely who they were. It has been a common opinion, that reference is had by Peter and Jude to the sect of the Nicolaitanes; and this opinion, Hug remarks, is 'neither improbable nor incompatible with the expressions of the two apostles, so far as we have any certain knowledge concerning this sect.' 'The statements of the ancients, in regard to their profligacy and their detestable course of life, are so consonant with each other and with the charges of the apostles, that the two epistles may be pertinently considered as referring to them.'—Intro., § 182.

It is not possible to ascertain with certainty the time when the epistle was written. There are no marks of time in it by which that can be known, nor is there any account among the early Christian writers which determines this. Benson supposes that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, a few weeks or months after the second epistle of Peter; Mill, that it was written about A.D. 90; Dodwell and Cave, that it was written *after* the destruction of Jerusalem, in the year 71 or 72; L'Enfant and Beausobre, that it was between the year 70 and 75; Witsius and Estius, that it was in the apostle's old age; Lardner, that it was about the year 65 or 66; Michaelis, that it was before the destruction of Jerusalem; and Macknight, that it was in the latter part of the apostolic age, and not long before the death of Jude. All this, it is manifest, is mostly conjecture. There are only *two* things, it seems to me, in the epistle, which can be regarded as *any* indication of the time. One is the striking resemblance to the second epistle of Peter, referring clearly to the same kind of errors, and warning those whom he addressed against the arts of the same kind of teachers, thus showing that it was written at about the same time as that epistle; and the other is, that it seems to have been written *before* the destruction of Jerusalem, for, as Michaelis has well remarked, 'As the author has mentioned (vers. 5-8) several well-known instances of Divine justice in punishing sinners, he would probably, if Jerusalem had been already destroyed, not have neglected to add to his other examples this most remarkable instance of Divine vengeance, especially as Christ had himself foretold it.'—Intro. iv. 372. As there is reason to suppose that the second epistle of Peter was written about A.D. 64 or 65, we shall not, probably, err in supposing that this was written not far from that time.

§ IV. *The resemblance between this Epistle and the second chapter of the second Epistle of Peter.*

One of the most remarkable things respecting this epistle, is its resemblance to the second chapter of the second epistle of Peter—a similarity so striking as to make it quite certain that one of these writers had seen the epistle of the other, and copied from it; or rather, perhaps, adopted the language of the other as expressing his own views. It is evident, that substantially the same class of teachers is referred to by both; that they held the same errors, and were guilty of the same corrupt and dangerous practices; and that the two apostles, in describing them, made use of the same expressions, and employed the same arguments against them. They refer to the same facts in history, and to the same arguments from tradition; and if either of them quoted an apocryphal book, both have done it. On the resemblance, compare the following places:—Jude 8, with 2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 10, with 2 Pet. ii. 12; Jude 16, with 2 Pet. ii. 18; Jude 4, with 2 Pet. i. 2, 3; Jude 7, with 2 Pet. ii. 6; Jude 9, with 2 Pet. ii. 11. The similarity between the two is so striking, both in the general structure of the argument and in the particular expressions, that it cannot have been accidental. It is not such a resemblance as would be likely to occur in two authors, if they had been writing in a wholly independent manner. In regard to this resemblance, there is but one of three ways in which it can be accounted for: either that the Holy Spirit inspired both of them to say the same thing, without the one having any knowledge of what the other said; or that they both copied from a common document, which is now lost; or that one copied from the other.

As to the first of these solutions, that the Holy Spirit inspired them both to

say the same thing, it may be observed that no one can deny that this is *possible*, but is by no means probable. No other instance of the kind occurs in the Bible, and the supposition would not be in accordance with what seems to have been a law in inspiration, that the sacred writers were allowed to express themselves according to the bent of their own genius. See Notes, 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

As to the second of these suppositions, that they both copied from a common document, which is now lost, it may be observed, that this is wholly without evidence. That such a thing was *possible*, there can be no doubt, but the supposition should not be adopted without necessity. If there had been such an original inspired document, it would probably have been preserved; or there would have been, in one or both of those who copied from it, some such allusion to it that it would have been possible to verify the supposition.

The remaining way of accounting for the resemblance, therefore, is to suppose that one of them had seen the epistle of the other, and adopted the same line of argument, and many of the same expressions. This will account for all the facts in the case, and can be supposed to be true without doing violence to any just view of their inspiration. A question still arises, however, whether Peter or Jude is the original writer from which the other has copied. This question it is impossible to determine with certainty, and it is of little importance. If the common opinion which is stated above be correct, that Peter wrote his epistle *first*, of course that determines the matter. But that is not absolutely certain, nor is there any method by which it can be determined. Hug adopts the other opinion, and supposes that Jude was the original writer. His reasons for this opinion are substantially these: (1.) That there is little probability that Jude, in so brief an epistle as his, consisting of only twenty-five verses, would have made use of foreign aid. (2.) That the style and phraseology of Jude is simple, unlaboured, and without ornament; while that of Peter is artificial, and wears the appearance of embellishment and amplification; that the simple language of Jude seems to have been moulded by Peter into a more elegant form, and is embellished with participles, and even with rhetorical flourishes. (3.) That there is allusion in both epistles (2 Pet. ii. 11; Jude 9) to a controversy between angels and fallen spirits; but that it is so alluded to by Peter, that it would not be understood without the more full statement of Jude; and that Peter evidently supposed that the letter of Jude was in the hands of those to whom he wrote, and that thus the allusion would be at once understood. It could not be supposed that every reader would be acquainted with the fact alluded to by Peter; it was not stated in the sacred books of the Jews, and it seems probable that there must have been some book to which they had access, where the information was more full. Jude, however, as the original writer, stated it more at length, and having done this, a bare allusion to it by Peter was all that was necessary. Jude states the matter definitely, and expressly mentions the dispute of Michael with the devil about the body of Moses. But the language of Peter is so general and indefinite, that we could not know what he meant unless we had Jude in our possession. See Hug's Intro., § 176. It must be admitted that these considerations have much weight, though they are not absolutely conclusive. It should be added, that whichever supposition is adopted, the fact that one has expressed substantially the same sentiments as the other, and in nearly the same language, is no reason for rejecting either, any more than the coincidence between the Gospels is a reason for concluding that only one of them can be an inspired document. There might have been good reasons why the same warnings and counsels should have proceeded from two inspired men.

GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE.

JUDE, ^a the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are ^b sanctified by God

the Father, and preserved ^c in Jesus Christ, and called : ^d

^a Lu.6.16. ^b Ac.20.32. ^c 1 Pe.1.5. ^d Ro.8.30.

ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLE.

(1.) THE inscription and salutation, vers. 1, 2. (2.) A statement of the reasons why the epistle was written, vers. 3, 4. The author felt it to be necessary to write to them, because certain plausible errorists had crept in among them, and there was danger that their faith would be subverted. (3.) A reference to past facts, showing that men who embraced error, and who followed corrupt and licentious practices, would be punished, vers. 5-7. He refers particularly to the unbelieving Hebrews whom God had delivered out of Egypt; to the apostate angels; and to the corrupt inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The object in this is to warn them from following the examples of those who would certainly lead them to destruction. (4.) He describes particularly the characteristics of these persons, agreeing substantially in the description with the statement of Peter, vers. 8-16. For these characteristics, comp. Intro. to 2 Peter, § 4. In general, they were corrupt, sensual, lewd, proud, arrogant, disorganizing, covetous, murmurers, complainers, wordy, windy, spots in their feasts of love. They had been and were professors of religion; they were professed reformers; they made great pretensions to uncommon knowledge of religious things. In the course of this description, the apostle contrasts their spirit with that of the archangel Michael, (ver. 9,) and declares that it was with reference to such a class of men that Enoch long ago uttered a solemn prophecy, vers. 14, 15. (5.) He calls to their remembrance the fact that

it had been predicted that there would be such mockers in the last periods of the world; and the faith of true Christians, therefore, was not to be shaken, but rather confirmed by the fact of their appearance, vers. 17-19. (6.) In view of these facts and dangers, the apostle addresses to them two exhortations: (a) to adhere steadfastly to the truths which they had embraced, vers. 20, 21; and (b) to endeavour to recall and save those who were led astray—carefully guarding themselves from the same contamination while they sought to save others, vers. 22, 23. (7.) The epistle closes with an appropriate ascription of praise to him who was able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before his throne, vers. 24, 25.

1. *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ.* If the view taken in the Introduction to the epistle is correct, Jude sustained a near relation to the Lord Jesus, being, as James was, 'the Lord's brother,' Gal. i. 19. The reasons why he did not advert to this fact here, as an appellation which would serve to designate him, and as showing his authority to address others in the manner in which he proposed to do in this epistle, probably were, (1,) that the right to do this did not rest on his mere *relationship* to the Lord Jesus, but on the fact that he had called certain persons to be his apostles, and had authorized them to do it; and, (2,) that a reference to this relationship, as a ground of authority, might have created jealousies among the apostles themselves. We may learn from the fact that Jude merely calls himself 'the servant of the Lord Jesus,' that is, a Christian, (a), that this is a distinction

2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, ^a it was needful for

me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend ^b for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

^a Tit. 1.4.

^b Ga. 2.5.

more to be desired than would be a mere natural relationship to the Saviour, and consequently (b) that it is a higher honour than any distinction arising from birth or family. Comp. Matt. xii. 46-50. ¶ *And brother of James.* See Intro., § 1. ¶ *To them that are sanctified by God the Father.* To those who are *holy*, or who are *saints*. Comp. Notes, Rom. i. 7; Phil. i. 1. Though this title is general, it can hardly be doubted that he had some *particular* saints in his view, to wit, those who were exposed to the dangers to which he refers in the epistle. See Intro., § 3. As the epistle was probably sent to Christians residing in a certain place, it was not necessary to designate them more particularly, though it was often done. The Syriac version adds here, 'To the *Gentiles* who are called, beloved of God the Father,' &c. ¶ *And preserved in Jesus Christ.* See Notes, 1 Pet. i. 5. The meaning is, that they owed their preservation wholly to him; and if they were brought to everlasting life, it would be only by him. What the apostle here says of those to whom he wrote, is true of all Christians. They would all fall away and perish if it were not for the grace of God keeping them. ¶ *And called.* Called to be saints. See Notes, Rom. i. 7; Eph. iv. 1.

2. *Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.* This is not quite the form of salutation used by the other apostles, but it is one equally expressive of an earnest desire for their welfare. These things are mentioned as the choicest blessings which could be conferred on them: *mercy*—in the pardon of all their sins and acceptance with God; *peace*—with God, with their fellow-men, in their own consciences, and in the prospect of death; and *love*—to God, to the brethren, to all the world. What blessings are there which these do not include?

3. *Beloved.* An expression of strong affection used by the apostles when ad-

dressing their brethren, Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. iv. 14; x. 14; xv. 58; 2 Cor. vii. 1; xii. 19; Phil. ii. 12; iv. 1; and often elsewhere. ¶ *When I gave all diligence.* When I applied my mind earnestly; implying that he had reflected on the subject, and thought particularly what it would be desirable to write to them. The state of mind referred to is that of one who was purposing to write a letter, and who thought over carefully what it would be proper to say. The mental process which led to writing the epistle seems to have been this: (a) For some reasons—mainly from his strong affection for them—he purposed to write to them. (b) The general subject on which he designed to write was, of course, something pertaining to the common salvation—for he and they were Christians. (c) On reflecting what particular thing pertaining to this common salvation it was best for him to write on, he felt that, in view of their peculiar dangers, it ought to be an exhortation to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to them. Macknight renders this less correctly, 'Making all haste to write to you,' &c. But the idea is rather that he set himself diligently and earnestly to write to them of the great matter in which they had a common interest. ¶ *To write unto you of the common salvation.* The salvation common to Jews and Gentiles, and to all who bore the Christian name. The meaning is, that he did not think of writing on any subject pertaining to a particular class or party, but on some subject in which all who were Christians had a common interest. There are great matters of religion held in common by all Christians, and it is important for religious teachers to address their fellow Christians on those common topics. After all, they are more important than the things which we may hold as peculiar to our own party or sect, and should be more frequently dwelt upon. ¶ *It was needful*

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, ^awho ^bwere before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning ^cthe grace of

our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

^a 2 Pe. 2.1.

^b Ro. 9.22.

^c Ti. 1.15, 16.

for me to write to you. 'I reflected on the general subject, prompted by my affectionate regard to write to you of things pertaining to religion in general, and, on looking at the matter, I found there was a particular topic or aspect of the subject on which it was *necessary* to address you. I saw the danger in which you were from false teachers, and felt it not only necessary that I should write to you, but that I should make *this* the particular subject of my counsels.' ¶ And exhort you. 'That I should make my letter in fact an exhortation on a particular topic.' ¶ *That ye should earnestly contend.* Comp. Gal. ii. 5. The word here rendered *earnestly contend*—*ἀγανακτίζετε*—is one of those words used by the sacred writers which have allusion to the Grecian games. Comp. Notes, 1 Cor. ix. 24, seq. This word does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. It means *to contend upon*—i. e. *for or about* anything; and would be applicable to the earnest effort put forth in those games to obtain the prize. The reference here, of course, is only to contention by argument, by reasoning, by holding fast the principles of religion, and maintaining them against all opposers. It would not justify 'contention' by arms, by violence, or by persecution; for (a) that is contrary to the spirit of true religion, and to the requirements of the gospel elsewhere revealed; (b) it is not demanded by the proper meaning of the word, all that that fairly implies being the effort to maintain truth by argument and by a steady life; (c) it is not the most effectual way to keep up truth in the world to attempt to do it by force and arms. ¶ *For the faith.* The system of religion revealed in the gospel. It is called *faith*, because that is the cardinal virtue in the system, and because all depends on that. The rule here will require that we should contend in this manner for all *truth*. ¶ *Once delivered unto the saints.* The word here used (*παρά*) may mean either

once for all, in the sense that it was then complete, and would not be repeated; or *formerly*, to wit, by the author of the system. Doddridge, Estius, and Beza, understand it in the former way; Macknight and others in the latter; Benson improperly supposes that it means *fully or perfectly*. Perhaps the more usual sense of the word would be, that it was done *once* in the sense that it is not to be done again, and therefore in the sense that it was then complete, and that nothing was to be added to it. There is indeed the idea that it was *formerly* done, but with this additional thought, that it was then complete. Compare, for this use of the Greek word rendered *once*, Heb. ix. 26—28; x. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 18. The *delivering* of this faith to the saints here referred to is evidently that made by revelation, or the system of truth which God has made known in his word. Everything which He has revealed, we are to defend as true. We are to surrender no part of it whatever, for every part of that system is of value to mankind. By a careful study of the Bible we are to ascertain what that system *is*, and then in all places, at all times, in all circumstances, and at every sacrifice, we are to maintain it.

4. *For there are certain men crept in unawares.* The apostle now gives a reason for thus defending the truth, to wit, that there were artful and wicked men who had crept into the church, pretending to be religious teachers, but whose doctrines tended to sap the very foundations of truth. The apostle Peter, describing these same persons, says, 'who *privily* shall bring in damnable heresies.' See Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 1. Substantially the same idea is expressed here by saying that they 'had crept in *unawares*;' that is, they had come in *by stealth*; they had not come by a bold and open avowal of their real sentiments. They professed to teach the Christian religion, when in fact they denied some of its fundamental doc-

trines; they professed to be holy, when in fact they were living most scandalous lives. In all ages there have been men who were willing to do this for base purposes. ¶ *Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.* That is, to the condemnation (*πείρα*) which he proceeds to specify. The statements in the subsequent part of the epistle show that by the word used here he refers to the wrath that shall come upon the ungodly in the future world. See vers. 5-7, 15. The meaning clearly is, that the punishment which befell the unbelieving Israelites, (ver. 5;) the rebel angels, (ver. 6;) the inhabitants of Sodom, (ver. 7;) and of which Enoch prophesied, (ver. 15,) awaited those persons. The phrase of *old*—*πάλαι*—means *long ago*, implying that a considerable time had elapsed, though without determining how much. It is used in the New Testament only in the following places: Matt. xi. 21, 'they would have repented *long ago*;' Mark xv. 44, 'whether he had been *any while* dead;' Luke x. 13, 'they had a *great while ago* repented;' Heb. i. 1, 'spake *in time past* unto the fathers;' 2 Pet. i. 9, 'purged from his *old* sins;' and in the passage before us. So far as this word is concerned, the reference here may have been to *any* former remote period, whether in the time of the prophets, of Enoch, or in eternity. It does not *necessarily* imply that it was *eternal*, though it *might* apply to that, if the thing referred to was, from other sources, certainly known to have been from eternity. It may be doubted, however, whether, if the thing referred to had occurred from eternity, this would have been the word used to express it, (comp. Eph. i. 4;) and it is certain that it cannot be *proved* from the use of this word (*πάλαι*) that the 'ordination to condemnation' was eternal. Whatever may be referred to by that 'ordinating to condemnation,' *this* word will not prove that it was an eternal ordination. All that is *fairly* implied in it will be met by the supposition that it occurred in *any* remote period, say in the time of the prophets. The word here rendered '*before ordained*'—*προηγγραμμέναι*, from *προγράφω*—occurs in the New Testament only here and in the following places: Rom. xv. 4, twice,

'Whatsoever things *were written aforetime, were written* for our learning;' Gal. iii. 1, 'Jesus Christ *hath been evidently set forth*;' and Eph. iii. 3, 'As *I wrote afore* in few words.' Comp. Notes, Gal. iii. 1. In these places there is evidently no idea implied of *ordaining*, or *pre-ordaining*, in the sense in which those words are now commonly understood. To that word there is usually attached the idea of designating or appointing as by an arbitrary decree; but no such meaning enters into the word here used. The Greek word properly means, *to write before*; then *to have written before*; and then, with reference to time future, *to post up beforehand in writing*; *to announce by posting up on a written tablet*, as of some ordinance, law, or requirement; as descriptive of what will be, or what should be. Comp. Rob. Lexicon. Burder (in Rosenmüller's *Morgenland*, *in loc.*) remarks that 'the names of those who were to be tried were usually posted up in a public place, as was also their sentence after their condemnation, and that this was denoted by the same Greek word which the apostle uses here. Elsner,' says he, 'remarks that the Greek authors use the word as applicable to those who, among the Romans, were said to be *proscribed*; that is, those whose names were posted up in a public place, whereby they were appointed to death, and in reference to whom a reward was offered to any one who would kill them.' The idea here clearly is that of some such designation beforehand as *would occur* if the persons had been publicly *posted* as appointed to death. Their *names*, indeed, were not mentioned, but there was such a description of them, or of their character, that it was clear who were meant. In regard to the question what the apostle *means* by such a designation or appointment beforehand, it is clear that he does not refer in this place to any arbitrary or eternal decree, but to such a designation as was made by the facts to which he immediately refers—that is, to the Divine prediction that there would be such persons, (vers. 14, 15, 18;) and to the consideration that in the case of the unbelieving Israelites, the rebel angels, and the inhabitants of

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, ^ahaving

^a 1 Co.16.5-12.

Sodom, there was as clear a proof that such persons would be punished as if their names had been posted up. All these instances bore on just such cases as these, and in these facts they might read their sentence as clearly as if their names had been written on the face of the sky. This interpretation seems to me to embrace all that the words *fairly* imply, and all that the exigence of the case demands; and if this be correct, then two things follow: (1,) that this passage should not be adduced to prove that God has from all eternity, by an arbitrary decree, ordained a certain portion of the race to destruction, whatever may be true on that point; and, (2,) that *all* abandoned sinners now may see, in the facts which have occurred in the treatment of the wicked in past times, just as certain evidence of their destruction, if they do not repent, as if their names were written in letters of light, and if it were announced to the universe that they would be damned. ¶ *Ungodly men.* Men without piety or true religion, whatever may be their pretensions. ¶ *Turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness.* Abusing the doctrines of grace so as to give indulgence to corrupt and carnal propensities. That is, probably, they gave this form to their teaching, as Antinomians have often done, that by the gospel they were released from the obligations of the law, and might give indulgence to their sinful passions in order that grace might abound. Antinomianism began early in the world, and has always had a wide prevalence. The liability of the doctrines of grace to be thus abused was foreseen by Paul, and against such abuse he earnestly sought to guard the Christians of his time, Rom. vi. 1, seq. ¶ *And denying the only Lord God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* See Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 1. That is, the doctrines which they held were in fact a denial of the only true God, and of the Redeemer of men. It cannot be supposed that they openly and formally did this, for then they could

saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed ^b them that believed not.

^b Nu.14.29,37; He.3.16-19.

have made no pretensions to the name Christian, or even to religion of any kind; but the meaning must be, that *in fact* the doctrines which they held amounted to a denial of the true God, and of the Saviour in his proper nature and work. Some have proposed to read this, 'denying the only Lord God, *even* (~~and~~) our Lord Jesus Christ'; but the Greek does not demand this construction even if it would admit it, and it is most in accordance with Scripture usage to retain the common translation. It may be added, also, that the common translation expresses all that the exigence of the passage requires. Their doctrines and practice tended as really to the denial of the true God as they did to the denial of the Lord Jesus. Peter in his second epistle, (ch. ii. 1,) has adverted only to *one* aspect of their doctrine—that it denied the Saviour; Jude adds, if the common reading be correct, that it tended also to a denial of the true God. The word *God* (Θεός) is wanting in many manuscripts, and in the Vulgate and Coptic versions, and Mill, Hammond, and Bengel suppose it should be omitted. It is also wanting in the editions of Tittman, Griesbach, and Hahn. The amount of *authority* seems to be against it. The word rendered *Lord*, in the phrase 'Lord God,' is (Δεσπότης,) *despot*, and means here *Sovereign*, or *Ruler*, but it is a word which may be appropriately applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the same word which is used in the parallel passage in 2 Pet. ii. 1. See it explained in the Notes on that verse. If the word 'God' is to be omitted in this place, the passage would be wholly applicable, beyond question, to the Lord Jesus, and would mean, 'denying our only Sovereign and Lord, Jesus Christ.' It is perhaps impossible now to determine with certainty the true reading of the text; nor is it *very* material. Whichever of the readings is correct; whether the word (Θεός) *God* is to be retained or not, the sentiment expressed would be true, that their doctrines amounted to a

6 And the angels ^a which kept not their ¹ first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in

a Ja. 8.44.

1 *principality.*

practical denial of the only true God; and equally so that they were a denial of the only Sovereign and Lord of the true Christian.

5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance.* 'To show you what must be the doom of such men, I will call certain facts to your recollection, with which you are familiar, respecting the Divine treatment of the wicked in times past.'

¶ *Though ye once knew this.* That is, you were formerly made acquainted with these things, though they may not be now fresh in your recollection. On the different significations affixed to the word *once* in this place, see Bloomfield, *Crit. Digest, in loc.* The thing which seems to have been in the mind of the apostle was an intention to call to their recollection, as bearing on the case before him, facts with which they had formerly been familiar, and about which there was no doubt. It was the thing which we often endeavour to do in argument—to remind a person of some fact which he once knew very well, and which bears directly on the case. ¶ *How that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt.* Comp. Notes, 1 Cor. x. 5-12. The bearing of this fact on the case, before the mind of Jude, seems to have been this—that, as those who had been delivered from Egypt were afterward destroyed for their unbelief, or as the mere fact of their being rescued did not prevent destruction from coming on them, so the fact that these persons seemed to be delivered from sin, and had become professed followers of God, would not prevent their being destroyed if they led wicked lives. It might rather be inferred from the example of the Israelites that they would be. ¶ *Afterward.* ἐν δεύτερῳ—the second; that is, the second thing in order, or again. The expression is unusual in this sense, but the apostle seems to have fixed his mind on this event as a second great and important fact in regard to them. The first was that they were delivered; the second, that they were destroyed. ¶ *Destroyed them that believed not.*

everlasting chains, ^b under darkness, unto the judgment ^c of the great day.

b 2 Pe. 2.4.

c Ro. 20.10.

That is, on account of their unbelief. They were not permitted to enter the promised land, but were cut off in the wilderness. See the Notes on Heb. iii. 16-19.

6. *And the angels which kept not their first estate.* A second case denoting that the wicked would be punished. Comp. Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 4. The word rendered *estate* (ἀρχὴν) is, in the margin, *principality.* The word properly means, *beginning, commencement;* and then that which surpasses others, which is *first, &c.,* in point of rank and honour; or pre-eminence, priority, precedence, principedom. Here it refers to the rank and dignity which the angels had in heaven. That rank or pre-eminence they did not keep, but fell from it. On the word used here, comp. Eph. i. 2; iii. 10; Col. ii. 10, as applied to angels; 1 Cor. xv. 24; Eph. vi. 12; Col. ii. 15, as applied to demons. ¶ *But left their own habitation.* To wit, according to the common interpretation, in heaven. The word rendered *habitation* (οἰκητήριον) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means here that heaven was their native abode or dwelling-place. They left it by sin; but the expression here would seem possibly to mean that they became dissatisfied with their abode, and voluntarily preferred to change it for another. If they did become thus dissatisfied, the cause is wholly unknown, and conjecture is useless. Some of the later Jews supposed that they relinquished heaven out of love for the daughters of men.—Robinson. ¶ *He hath reserved in everlasting chains.* See Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 4. Peter says, 'chains of darkness;' that is, the darkness encompasses them as chains. Jude says that those chains are 'everlasting,' (διαιτῆς αἰδίου.) Comp. Rom. i. 20, 'his eternal power and Godhead.' The word does not elsewhere occur. It is an appropriate word to denote that which is eternal; and no one can doubt that if a Greek wished to express that idea, this would be a proper word to use. The sense is, that that deep darkness always

7 Even as Sodom^a and Gomorrha, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after¹ strange

flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

^a Ge. 19. 24.

¹ *other.*

endures; there is no intermission; no light; it will exist for ever. This passage in itself does not prove that the punishment of the rebel angels will be eternal, but merely that they are kept in a dark prison in which there is no light, and which is to exist for ever, with reference to the final trial. The punishment of the rebel angels *after* the judgment is represented as an everlasting fire, which has been prepared for them and their followers, Matt. xxv. 41.

7. *Even as Sodom and Gomorrha.* Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 6. ¶ *And the cities about them.* Admah and Zeboim, Gen. xiv. 2; Deut. xxix. 23; Hosea xi. 8. There may have been other towns, also, that perished at the same time, but these are particularly mentioned. They seem to have partaken of the same general characteristics, as neighbouring towns and cities generally do. ¶ *In like manner.* 'In a manner like to these,' (τὸν ὅμοιον τοῦτοις τρόπον.) The Greek word *these*, is in the plural number. There has been much diversity in interpreting this clause. Some refer it to the angels, as if it meant that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah committed sin in a way similar to the angels; some suppose that it refers to the wicked teachers about whom Jude was discoursing, meaning that Sodom and Gomorrah committed the same kind of sins which they did; some that the meaning is, that 'the cities round about Sodom and Gomorrah' sinned in the same way as those cities; and some that they were punished in the same manner, and were set forth like them as an example. I see no evidence that it refers to the angels; and if it did, it would not prove, as some have supposed, that their sin was of the same kind as that of Sodom, since there might have been a resemblance in *some* respects, though not in all. I see no reason to believe, as Mac-knight holds, that it refers to *false teachers*, since that would be to suppose that the inhabitants of Sodom copied their example long *before* the example was set. It seems to me, therefore,

that the reference is to the cities round about Sodom; and that the sense is, that they committed iniquity in the same manner as the inhabitants of Sodom did, and were set forth in the same way as an example. ¶ *Going after strange flesh.* Marg., *other.* The reference seems to be to the peculiar sin which, from the name Sodom, has been called *sodomy*. Comp. Rom. i. 27. The meaning of the phrase *going after* is, that they were greatly addicted to this vice. The word *strange*, or *other*, refers to that which is contrary to nature. Doddridge, however, explains it, 'going after strange and detestable gratifications of their pampered and indulged flesh.' ¶ *Are set forth for an example.* They furnish a warning against all such conduct, and a demonstration that punishment shall come upon the ungodly. The condemnation of any sinner, or of any class of sinners, always furnishes such a warning. See Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 6. ¶ *Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.* The word rendered *suffering* (παίχουσαι) means, properly, *holding under*—as, for example, the hand; then to hold towards any one, as the ear—to give attention; then it is used as denoting to hold a discourse towards or with any one, or to hold satisfaction to any one, to make atonement; and then as *undergoing*, *paying*, or *suffering punishment*, when united, as it is here, with the word δίκην, (*punishment*, or *vengeance*.) See *Rob. Lex.* Here it expresses the idea of undergoing punishment. The word properly agrees in the construction with *cities*, (πόλεις,) referring to Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them; but the things affirmed relate to the *inhabitants* of those cities. The word *vengeance* means punishment; that is, such vengeance as the Lord takes on the guilty; not vengeance for the gratification of private and personal feeling, but like that which a magistrate appoints for the maintenance of the laws; such as justice demands. The phrase 'eternal fire' is one that is often used to denote future punishment—as ex-

8 Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile "the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael "the archangel, when contending with the devil he

disputed about the body of Moses, "durst "not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord "rebuke thee.

a 2 Pe. 2.10, 11.

b Da. 12.1.

c De. 34.6.

d Ex. 23.28.

e Ze. 3.3.

pressing the severity and intensity of the suffering. See Notes, Matt. xxv. 41. As here used, it cannot mean that the fires which consumed Sodom and Gomorrah were literally eternal, or were kept always burning, for that was not true. The expression seems to denote, in this connection, two things: (1.) That the destruction of the cities of the plain, with their inhabitants, was as entire and perpetual *as if* the fires had been always burning—the consumption was absolute and enduring—the sinners were wholly cut off, and the cities for ever rendered desolate; and (2.) that, in its nature and duration, this was a striking emblem of the destruction which will come upon the ungodly. I do not see that the apostle here means to affirm that those particular sinners who dwelt in Sodom would be punished for ever, for his expressions do not directly affirm that, and his argument does not demand it; but still the *image* in his mind, in the destruction of those cities, was clearly that of the utter desolation and ruin of which this was the emblem; of the perpetual destruction of the wicked, like that of the cities of the plain. If this had not been the case, there was no reason why he should have used the word *eternal*—meaning here *perpetual*—since, if in his mind there was no image of future punishment, all that the argument would have demanded was the simple statement that they were cut off by fire. The passage, then, cannot be used to prove that the particular dwellers in Sodom will be punished for ever—whatever may be the truth on that point; but that there is a place of eternal punishment, of which that was a striking emblem. The meaning is, that the case was one which furnished a demonstration of the fact that God will punish sin; that this was an example of the punishment which God sometimes inflicts on sinners in this world, and a type of that eternal punishment which will be inflicted in the next.

8. *Likewise also.* In the same way do these persons defile the flesh, or resemble the inhabitants of Sodom; that is, they practise the same kind of vices. What the apostle says is, that their character resembled that of the inhabitants of Sodom; the example which he adduces of the punishment which was brought on those sinners, leaves it to be clearly inferred that the persons of whom he was speaking would be punished in a similar manner. ¶ *These filthy dreamers.* The word *filthy* has been supplied by our translators, but there is no good reason why it should have been introduced. The Greek word (*βρωμιάζον*) means to dream; and is applied to these persons as holding doctrines and opinions which sustained the same relation to truth which dreams do to good sense. Their doctrines were the fruits of mere imagination, foolish vagaries and fancies. The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, except in Acts ii. 17. where it is applied to visions in dreams, ¶ *Defile the flesh.* Pollute themselves; give indulgence to corrupt passions and appetites. See Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 10. ¶ *Despise dominion.* The same Greek word is used here which occurs in 2 Pet. ii. 10. See Notes on that verse. ¶ *And speak evil of dignities.* See Notes on 2 Pet. ii. 10.

9. *Yet Michael the archangel, &c.* This verse has given more perplexity to expositors than any other part of the epistle; and in fact the difficulties in regard to it have been so great that some have been led to regard the epistle as spurious. The difficulty has arisen from these two circumstances: (1.) Ignorance of the origin of what is said here of Michael the archangel, nothing of this kind being found in the Old Testament; and (2.) the improbability of the story itself, which looks like a mere Jewish fable. Peter in his second epistle, chap. ii. 2, made a *general* reference to angels as not bringing railing accusations against others before the

Lord; but Jude refers to a particular case—the case of Michael when contending about the body of Moses. The methods proposed of reconciling the passage with the proper ideas of inspiration have been various, though perhaps no one of them relieves it of all difficulty. It would be inconsistent with the design of these Notes to go into an extended examination of this passage. Those who wish to see a full investigation of it may consult Michaelis' Introduction to the New Testament, vol. iv. pp. 378–393; Lardner, vol. vi. p. 312, seq.; Hug, Intro. § 183; Benson, *in loc.*; Rosenmüller's Morgenland, iii. pp. 196, 197; and Wetstein, *in loc.* The principal methods of relieving the difficulty have been the following: I. Some have supposed that the reference is to the passage in Zechariah, chap. iii. 1, seq. 'And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan,' &c. The opinion that Jude refers to this passage was held by Lardner. But the objections to this are very obvious: (1.) There is no similarity between the two, except the expression, 'the Lord rebuke thee.' (2.) The name Michael does not occur at all in the passage in Zechariah. (3.) There is no mention made of the 'body of Moses' there, and no allusion to it whatever. (4.) There is no intimation that there was any such contention about his body. There is a mere mention that Satan resisted the angel of the Lord, as seen in the vision, but no intimation that the controversy had any reference to Moses in any way. (5.) The reason of the resistance which Satan offered to the angel in the vision as seen by Zechariah is stated. It was in regard to the consecration of Joshua to the office of high priest implying a return of prosperity to Jerusalem, and the restoration of the worship of God there in its purity; see Zech. iii. 2. To this Satan was of course opposed, and the vision represents him as resisting the angel in his purpose thus to set him apart to that office. These reasons seem to me to make it clear that Jude did not refer to the passage in Zechariah, nor is there any other place in the Old

Testament to which it can be supposed he had reference. II. Hug supposes that the reference here, as well as that in ver. 14, to the prophecy of Enoch, is derived from some apocryphal books existing in the time of Jude; and that though those books contained mere fables, the apostle appealed to them, not as conceding what was said to be true, but in order to refute and rebuke those against whom he wrote, out of books which they admitted to be of authority. Intro. § 183. Arguments and confutations, he says, drawn from the sacred Scriptures, would have been of no avail in reasoning with them, for these they evaded, (2 Pet. iii. 16,) and there were no surer means of influencing them than those writings which they themselves valued as the sources of their peculiar views. According to this, the apostle did not mean to vouch for the truth of the story, but merely to make use of it in argument. The objection to this is, that the apostle does in fact seem to refer to the contest between Michael and the devil as true. He speaks of it in the same way in which he would have done if he had spoken of the death of Moses, or of his smiting the rock, or of his leading the children of Israel across the Red Sea, or of any other fact in history. If he regarded it as a mere fable, though it would have been honest and consistent with all proper views of inspiration for him to have said to those against whom he argued, that on their own principles such and such things were true, yet it would not be honest to speak of it as a fact which *he* admitted to be true. Besides, it should be remembered that he is not arguing with *them*, in which case it might be admissible to reason in this way, but was making statements to others *about* them, and showing that they manifested a spirit entirely different from that which the angels evinced even when contending in a just cause against the prince of all evil. III. It has been supposed that the apostle quotes an apocryphal book existing in his time, containing this account, and that he means to admit that the account is true. Origen mentions such a book, called 'the Assumption of Moses,' (*Ἀναλήψις τοῦ Μωϋσέως*), as extant in his time, containing this very account

of the contest between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses. That was a Jewish Greek book, and Origen supposed that this was the source of the account here. That book is now lost. There is still extant a book in Hebrew, called מִשְׁכַּח מֹשֶׁה—the Death of Moses,' which some have supposed to be the book referred to by Origen. That book contains many fabulous stories about the death of Moses, and is evidently the work of some Jew drawing wholly upon his imagination. An account of it may be seen in Michaelis, Intro. iv. p. 381, seq. There is no reason to suppose that this is the same book referred to by Origen under the name of 'the Assumption of Moses;' and there is a moral certainty that an inspired writer could not have quoted it as of authority. Further, there can be no reasonable doubt that such a book as Origen refers to, under the title of 'the Assumption of Moses,' was extant in *his* time, but that does not prove by any means that it was extant in the time of Jude, or that he quoted it. There is, indeed, no positive proof that it was *not* extant in the time of Jude, but there is none that it was, and all the facts in the case will be met by the supposition that it was written afterwards, and that the tradition on the subject here referred to by Jude was incorporated into it. IV. The remaining supposition is, that Jude here refers to a prevalent *tradition* among the Jews, and that he has adopted it as containing an important truth, and one which bore on the subject under discussion. In support of this, it may be observed, (a) that it is well known that there were many traditions of this nature among the Jews. See Notes, Matt. xv. 2. (b) That though many of these traditions were puerile and false, yet there is no reason to doubt that some of them might have been founded in truth. (c) That an inspired writer might select those which were true, for the illustration of his subject, with as much propriety as he might select what was written; since if what was thus handed down by tradition was *true*, it was as proper to use it as to use a fact made known in any other way. (d) That in fact such traditions *were* adopted by the inspired writers when they would

serve to illustrate a subject which they were discussing. Thus Paul refers to the tradition about Jannes and Jambres as true history. See Notes, 2 Tim. iii. 8. (e) If, therefore, what is here said was *true*, there was no impropriety in its being referred to by Jude as an illustration of his subject. The only material question then is, whether it is *true*. And who can prove that it is not? What evidence is there that it is not? How is it possible to demonstrate that it is not? There are many allusions in the Bible to angels; there is express mention of such an angel as Michael, (Dan. xii. 1;) there is frequent mention of the devil; and there are numerous affirmations that both bad and good angels are employed in important transactions on the earth. Who can prove that such spirits never meet, never come in conflict, never encounter each other in executing their purposes? Good men meet bad men, and why is it any more absurd to suppose that good angels may encounter bad ones? It should be remembered, further, that there is no need of supposing that the subject of the dispute was about burying the body of Moses; or that Michael sought to bury it, and the devil endeavoured to prevent it—the one in order that it might not be worshipped by the Israelites, and the other that it might be. This indeed became incorporated into the tradition in the apocryphal books which were afterwards written; but Jude says not one word of this, and is in no way responsible for it. All that he says is, that there was a contention or dispute (διακρινόμενος διελίγετο) respecting *his body*. But when it was, or what was the occasion, or how it was conducted, he does *not* state, and we have no right to ascribe to him sentiments which he has not expressed. If ever such a controversy of any kind existed respecting that body, it is all that Jude affirms, and is all for which he should be held responsible. The sum of the matter, then, it seems to me is, that Jude has, as Paul did on another occasion, adopted a tradition which was prevalent in his time; that there is nothing necessarily absurd or impossible in the fact affirmed by the tradition, and that no one can possibly demonstrate that it is not true.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute

beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Woe unto them! for they have

¶ *The archangel.* The word *archangel* occurs only in one other place in the Scriptures. See Notes, 1 Thess. iv. 16. It means *ruling* or *chief* angel—the chief among the hosts of heaven. It is nowhere else applied to Michael, though his name is several times mentioned, Dan. x. 13, 21; xii. 1; Rev. xii. 7.

¶ *When contending.* This word (*μακρολογέω*) refers here to a contention or strife with words—a *disputation*. Nothing farther is necessarily implied, for it is so used in this sense in the New Testament, Acts xi. 2, 12, (*Greek*).

¶ *He disputed.* *δολίγησεν*. This word also would denote merely a controversy or contention of words, Mark ix. 34; Acts xvii. 2, 17; xviii. 4, 19; xxiv. 12.

¶ *About the body of Moses.* The nature of this controversy is wholly unknown, and conjecture is useless. It is *not* said, however, that there was a strife which should get the body, or a contention about burying it, or any physical contention about it whatever. That there *may* have been, no one indeed can disprove; but all that the apostle says would be met by a supposition that there was *any* debate of any kind respecting that body, in which Michael, though provoked by the opposition of the worst being in the universe, still restrained himself from any outbreking of passion, and used only the language of mild but firm rebuke. ¶ *Durst not.* *οὐκ ἐτόλμησεν*—‘Did not dare.’ It is not said that he did not dare to do it because he feared Satan; but all that the word implies is met by supposing that he did not dare to do it because he feared the Lord, or because in any circumstances it would be wrong. ¶ *A railing accusation.* The Greek word is *blasphemy*. The meaning is, he did not indulge in the language of mere reproach: and it is implied here that such language would be wrong anywhere. If it would be right to bring a railing accusation against any one, it would be against the devil. ¶ *But said, The Lord rebuke thee.* The word here used (*τιπτύω*) means, properly, to put honour

upon; and then to adjudge or confirm. Then it came to be used in the sense of commanding or *restraining*—as, e. g., the winds and waves, Matt. viii. 26; Mark iv. 39. Then it is used in the sense of *admonishing strongly*; of enjoining upon one, *with the idea of censure*, Matt. xviii. 18; Mark i. 25; Luke iv. 35, 41. This is the idea here—the expression of a wish that *the Lord* would take the matter of the dispute to himself, and that he would properly restrain and control Satan, with the implied idea that his conduct was wrong. The *language* is the same as that recorded in Zech. iii. 2, as used by ‘the angel’ respecting Satan. But, as before observed, there is no reason to suppose that the apostle referred to that. The fact, however, that the angel is said to have used the language on that occasion may be allowed to give confirmation to what is said here, since it shows that it is the language which angelic beings naturally employ.

10. *But these speak evil of those things which they know not.* These false and corrupt teachers employ reproachful language of those things which lie wholly beyond the reach of their vision. Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 12. ¶ *But what they know naturally.* As mere men; as animals; that is, in things pertaining to their physical nature, or in which they are on a level with the brute creation. The reference is to the natural instincts, the impulses of appetite, and passion, and sensual pleasure. The idea of the apostle seems to be, that their knowledge was confined to those things. They did not rise above them to the intelligent contemplation of those higher things, against which they used only the language of reproach. There are multitudes of such men in the world. Towards high and holy objects they use only the language of reproach. They do not understand them, but they can rail at them. Their knowledge is confined to the subjects of sensual indulgence, and all their intelligence in that respect is employed only to corrupt and destroy themselves. ¶ *As*

gone in the way of Cain, ^a and ran greedily after the error of Balaam ^b for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. ^c

12 These are spots ^a in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you,

^a Ge. 4.5.

^b Nu. 22.7, 21.

^c Nu. 16.1, &c.

brute beasts. Animals without intelligence. Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 12. ¶ *In those things they corrupt themselves.* They live only for sensual indulgence, and sink deeper and deeper in sensual gratifications.

11. *Woe unto them!* See Matt. xi. 21. ¶ *For they have gone in the way of Cain.* Gen. iv. 5-12. That is, they have evinced disobedience and rebellion as he did; they have shown that they are proud, corrupt, and wicked. The apostle does not specify the points in which they had imitated the example of Cain, but it was probably in such things as these—pride, haughtiness, the hatred of religion, restlessness under the restraints of virtue, envy that others were more favoured, and a spirit of hatred of the brethren (comp. 1 John iii. 15) which would lead to murder. ¶ *And ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward.* The word rendered *ran greedily*—*ἰσχυρόνως*, from *ἰσχύω*—means to pour out; and then, when spoken of persons, that they are poured out, or that they rush tumultuously on an object, that is, that they give themselves up to anything. The idea here is, that all restraint was relaxed, and that they rushed on tumultuously to any course of life that promised gain. See Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 15. ¶ *And perished.* They perish, or they will perish. The result is so certain, that the apostle speaks of it as if it were already done. The thought seems to have lain in his mind in this manner: he thinks of them as having the same character as Korah, and then at once thinks of them as destroyed in the same manner, or as if it were already done. They are identified with him in their character and doom. The word rendered *perish* (*ἀπώλλυμι*) is often used to denote future punishment, Matt. x. 28, 39; xviii. 14; Mark i. 24; Luke xiii. 8, 5; John iii. 15, 16 · x. 28; 2 Thess.

feeding ^a themselves without fear: clouds ^b they are without water, carried ^c about of winds; trees whose fruit ^d withereth, without fruit, twice dead, 'plucked' up by the roots;

^d 2 Pe. 2.13.

^e Phil. 3.19.

^f Pr. 25.14.

^g Ep. 4.14.

^h Jn. 15.4-6.

ⁱ He. 5.4-6.

^j Mat. 15.13.

ii. 10; 2 Pet. iii. 9. ¶ *In the gainsaying of Core.* Of Korah, Numb. xvi. 1-30. The word *gainsaying* here means properly contradiction, or speaking against; then controversy, question, strife; then contumely, reproach, or rebellion. The idea here seems to be, that they were guilty of insubordination; of possessing a restless and dissatisfied spirit; of a desire to rule, &c.

12. *These are spots.* See Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 13. The word used by Peter, however, is not exactly the same as that used here. Peter uses the word *σπίλοι*—*spiloi*; Jude, *σπιλάδες*—*spilades*. The word used by Jude means, properly, a rock by or in the sea; a cliff, &c. It may either be a rock by the sea, against which vessels may be wrecked, or a hidden rock in the sea, on which they may be stranded at an unexpected moment. See Hesychius and Pollux, as quoted by Wetstein, *in loc.* The idea here seems to be, not that they were spots and blemishes in their sacred feasts, but that they were like hidden rocks to the mariner. As those rocks were the cause of shipwreck, so these false teachers caused others to make shipwreck of their faith. They were as dangerous in the church as hidden rocks are in the ocean. ¶ *In your feasts of charity.* Your feasts of love. The reference is probably to the Lord's Supper, called a feast or festival of love, because (1,) it revealed the love of Christ to the world; (2,) because it was the means of strengthening the mutual love of the disciples: a festival which love originated, and where love reigned. It has been supposed by many, that the reference here is to festivals which were subsequently called *Agapæ*, and which are now known as *love-feasts*—meaning a festival immediately preceding the celebration of the Lord's Supper. But there are strong objections to the supposition that there is reference here to such a

festival. (1.) There is no evidence, unless it be found in this passage, that such celebrations had the sanction of the apostles. They are nowhere else mentioned in the New Testament, or alluded to, unless it is in 1 Cor. xi. 17-34, an instance which is mentioned only to reprove it, and to show that such appendages to the Lord's Supper were wholly unauthorized by the original institution, and were liable to gross abuse. (2.) The supposition that they existed, and that they are referred to here, is not necessary in order to a proper explanation of this passage. All that it fairly means will be met by the supposition that the reference is to the Lord's Supper. That was in every sense a festival of love or charity. The words will appropriately apply to that, and there is no necessity of supposing anything else in order to meet their full signification. (3.) There can be no doubt that such a custom early existed in the Christian church, and extensively prevailed; but it can readily be accounted for without supposing that it had the sanction of the apostles, or that it existed in their time. (a) Festivals prevailed among the Jews, and it would not be unnatural to introduce them into the Christian church. (b) The custom prevailed among the heathen of having a 'feast upon a sacrifice,' or in connection with a sacrifice; and as the Lord's Supper commemorated the great sacrifice for sin, it was not unnatural, in imitation of the heathen, to append a feast or festival to that ordinance, either before or after its celebration. (c) This very passage in Jude, with perhaps some others in the New Testament, (comp. 1 Cor. xi. 25; Acts ii. 46; vi. 2,) might be so construed as to seem to lend countenance to the custom. For these reasons it seems clear to me that the passage before us does not refer to *love-feasts*; and, therefore, that they are not authorized in the New Testament. See, however, Coleman's *Antiquities of the Christian church*, chap. xvi., § 13. ¶ *When they feast with you.* Showing that they were professors of religion. Notes on 2 Pet. ii. 13. ¶ *Feeding themselves without fear.* That is, without any proper reverence or respect for the ordinance; attending on the Lord's Supper as if it

were an ordinary feast, and making it an occasion of riot and gluttony. See 1 Cor. xi. 20-22. ¶ *Clouds they are,* &c. Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 17. Comp. Eph. iv. 14. ¶ *Trees whose fruit withereth.* The idea here is substantially the same as that expressed by Peter, when he says that they were 'wells without water;' and by him and Jude, when they say that they are like clouds driven about by the winds, that shed down no refreshing rain upon the earth. Such wells and clouds only disappoint expectations. So a tree that should promise fruit, but whose fruit should always wither, would be useless. The word rendered *withereth* (*φθισσασκοντι*) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means, properly, *autumnal*; and the expression here denotes *trees of autumn*, that is, trees stripped of leaves and verdure; trees on which there is no fruit. —*Robinson's Lex.* The sense, in the use of this word, therefore, is not exactly that which is expressed in our translation, that the fruit has *withered*, but rather that they are like the trees of autumn, which are stripped and bare. So the Vulgate, *arbores autumnales*. The idea of their being without fruit is expressed in the next word. The *image* which seems to have been before the mind of Jude in this expression, is that of the naked trees of autumn as contrasted with the bloom of spring and the dense foliage of summer. ¶ *Without fruit.* That is, they produce no fruit. Either they are wholly barren, like the barren fig-tree, or the fruit which was set never ripens, but falls off. They are, therefore, useless as religious instructors—as much so as a tree is which produces no fruit. ¶ *Twice dead.* That is, either meaning that they are seen to be dead in two successive seasons, showing that there is no hope that they will revive and be valuable; or, using the word *twice* to denote emphasis, meaning that they are absolutely or altogether dead. Perhaps the idea is, that successive summers and winters have passed over them, and that no signs of life appear. ¶ *Plucked up by the roots.* The wind blows them down, or they are removed by the husbandman as only cumbering the ground. They are not cut down—leaving a

13 Raging waves ^a of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering ^b stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

^a Is. 57. 20.

^b Re. 8. 10, 11.

stump that might sprout again—but they are extirpated root and branch; that is, they are wholly worthless. There is a regular ascent in this climax. First, the apostle sees a tree apparently of autumn, stripped and leafless; then he sees it to be a tree that bears no fruit; then he sees it to be a tree over which successive winters and summers pass and no signs of life appear; then as wholly extirpated. So he says it is with these men. They produce no fruits of holiness; months and years show that there is no vitality in them; they are fit only to be extirpated and cast away. Alas! how many professors of religion are there, and how many religious teachers, who answer to this description!

13. *Raging waves of the sea.* Comp. 2 Pet. ii. 18. They are like the wild and restless waves of the ocean. The image here seems to be, that they were noisy and bold in their professions, and were as wild and ungovernable in their passions as the billows of the sea.

¶ *Foaming out their own shame.* The waves are lashed into foam, and break and dash on the shore. They seem to produce nothing but foam, and to proclaim their own shame, that after all their wild roaring and agitation they should effect no more. So with these noisy and vaunting teachers. What they impart is as unsubstantial and valueless as the foam of the ocean waves, and the result is in fact a proclamation of their own shame. Men with so loud professions should produce much more.

¶ *Wandering stars.* The word rendered *wandering* (πλανῆται) is that from which we have derived the word *planet*. It properly means one who wanders about; a wanderer; and was given by the ancients to planets because they seemed to wander about the heavens, now forward and now backward among the other stars, without any fixed law.—Pliny, Nat. Hist. ii. 6. Cicero, however, who saw that they were governed by certain established laws, says that the

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord ^c cometh with ten thousand of his saints,

^c Ze. 14. 5.

name seemed to be given to them without reason.—De Nat. Deo. ii. 20. So far as the words used are concerned, the reference may be either to the planets, properly so called, or to comets, or to *ignes fatui*, or meteors. The proper idea is that of stars that have no regular motions, or that do not move in fixed and regular orbits. The laws of the planetary motions were not then understood, and their movements seemed to be irregular and capricious; and hence, if the reference is to them, they might be regarded as not an unapt illustration of these teachers. The sense seems to be, that the aid which we derive from the stars, as in navigation, is in the fact that they are regular in their places and movements, and thus the mariner can determine his position. If they had no regular places and movements, they would be useless to the seaman. So with false religious teachers. No dependence can be placed on them. It is not uncommon to compare a religious teacher to a star, Rev. i. 16; ii. 1. Comp. Rev. xxii. 16. ¶ *To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.* Not to the stars, but to the teachers. The language here is the same as in 2 Pet. ii. 17. See Notes on that verse.

14. *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam.* The seventh in the direct line of descent from Adam. The line of descent is Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahaleel, Jared, Enoch; see Gen. v. 3, seq. On the character of Enoch, see Notes on Heb. xi. 5. ¶ *Prophesied of these.* Uttered prophecies applicable to these men, or respecting just such men as these. It is not necessarily meant that he had these men specifically in his eye; but all that is fairly implied is, that his predictions were descriptive of them. There is no mention made in the writings of Moses of the fact that Enoch was a prophet; but nothing is more probable in itself, and there is no absurdity in supposing that a true prophecy, though unrecord-

15 To execute judgment upon all; ^aand to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have un-

godly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* ^b which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

^a Re. 20.12.

^b Ps. 78.9.

ed, might be handed down by tradition. See Notes, 2 Tim. iii. 8; Jude 9. The source from which Jude derived this passage respecting the prophecy of Enoch is unknown. Amidst the multitude of traditions, however, handed down by the Jews from a remote antiquity, though many of them were false, and many of a trifling character, it is reasonable to presume that some of them were true and were of importance. No man can *prove* that the one before us is not of that character; no one can show that an inspired writer might not be led to make the selection of a true prophecy from a mass of traditions; and as the prophecy before us is one that would be every way worthy of a prophet, and worthy to be preserved, its quotation furnishes no argument against the inspiration of Jude. There is no clear evidence that he quoted it from any book extant in his time. There is, indeed, now an apocryphal writing called 'the Book of Enoch,' containing a prediction strongly resembling this, but there is no certain proof that it existed so early as the time of Jude, nor, if it did, is it absolutely certain that he quoted from it. Both Jude and the author of that book may have quoted a common tradition of their time, for there can be no doubt that the passage referred to was handed down by tradition. The passage as found in 'the Book of Enoch' is in these words: 'Behold he comes with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon them, and destroy the wicked, and reprove all the carnal, for everything which the sinful and ungodly have done and committed against him,' chap. ii. Bib. Repository, vol. xv. p. 86. If the Book of Enoch was written after the time of Jude, it is natural to suppose that the prophecy referred to by him, and handed down by tradition, would be inserted in it. This book was discovered in an *Æthiopic* version, and was published with a translation by Dr. Laurence of Oxford, in 1821, and republished in 1832. A full account of it

and its contents may be seen in an article by Prof. Stuart in the Bib. Repository for January 1840, pp. 86-137. ¶ *The Lord cometh.* That is, the Lord will come. See Notes, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. It would seem from this to have been an early doctrine that the Lord would *descend* to the earth for judgment. ¶ *With ten thousand of his saints.* Or, *of his holy ones.* The word *saints* we now apply commonly to *redeemed* saints, or to Christians. The original word is, however, applicable to all who are *holy*, angels as well as men. The common representation in the Scriptures is, that he would come attended by the angels, (Matt. xxv. 31,) and there is doubtless allusion here to such beings. It is a common representation in the Old Testament also that God, when he manifests himself, is accompanied by great numbers of heavenly beings. See Psa. lxviii. 17; Deut. xxxiii. 2.

15. *To execute judgment upon all.* That is, he shall come to judge all the dwellers upon the earth, good and bad. ¶ *And to convince all.* The word *convince* we now use commonly in a somewhat limited sense, as meaning to *satisfy a man's own mind* either of the truth of some proposition, or of the fact that he has done wrong, as being in this latter sense synonymous with the word *convict*. This *conviction* is commonly produced by argument or truth, and is not necessarily followed by any sentence of disapprobation, or by any judicial condemnation. But this is clearly not the sense in which the word is used here. The purpose of the coming of the Lord will not be to *convince* men in that sense, though it is undoubtedly true that the wicked will see that their lives have been wrong; but it will be to pronounce a sentence on them as the result of the evidence of their guilt. The Greek word which is here used occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. ¶ *All that are ungodly among them.* All that are not pious; all that have no religion. ¶ *Of all their ungodly deeds, &c.* Of their

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you ^a there

^a 1 TI. 4. 1.

wicked actions and words. This is the common doctrine of the Bible, that all the wicked actions and words of men will be called into judgment. In regard to this passage, thus quoted from an ancient prophecy, we may remark, (1.) that the *style* bears the marks of its being a quotation, or of its being preserved by Jude in the language in which it had been handed down by tradition. It is not the style of Jude. It is not so terse, pointed, energetic. (2.) It has every probable mark of its having been actually delivered by Enoch. The age in which he lived was corrupt. The world was ripening for the deluge. He was himself a good man, and, as would seem perhaps, almost the only good man of his generation. Nothing would be more natural than that he should be reproached by hard words and speeches, and nothing more natural than that he should have pointed the men of his own age to the future judgment. (3.) The doctrine of the final judgment, if this was uttered by Enoch, was an early doctrine in the world. It was held even in the first generations of the race. It was one of those great truths early communicated to man to restrain him from sin, and to lead him to prepare for the great events which are to occur on the earth. The same doctrine has been transmitted from age to age, and is now one of the most important and the most affecting that refers to the final destiny of men.

16. *These are murmurers.* The word here used does not elsewhere occur, though the word *murmur* is frequent, Matt. xx. 11; Luke v. 30; John vi. 41, 43, 61; vii. 32; 1 Cor. x. 10. Comp. John vii. 12; Acts vi. 1; Phil. ii. 14; 1 Pet. iv. 9. The sense is that of repining or complaining under the allotments of Providence, or finding fault with God's plans, and purposes, and doings. ¶ *Complainers.* Literally, finding fault with one's own lot (*μυμψίσεις*.) The word

does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament; the *thing* often occurs in this world. Nothing is more common than for men to complain of their lot; to think that it is hard; to compare theirs with that of others, and to blame God for not having made their circumstances different. The poor complain that they are not rich like others; the sick that they are not well; the enslaved that they are not free; the bereaved that they are deprived of friends; the ugly that they are not beautiful; those in humble life that their lot was not cast among the great and the gay. The virtue that is opposed to this is *contentment*—a virtue of inestimable value. See Notes, Phil. iv. 11. ¶ *Walking after their own lusts.* Giving unlimited indulgence to their appetites and passions. See Notes, 2 Pet. iii. 3. ¶ *And their mouth speaketh great swelling words.* Notes on 2 Pet. ii. 18. ¶ *Having men's persons in admiration.* Showing great respect to certain persons, particularly the rich and the great. The idea is, that they were not *just* in the esteem which they had for others, or that they did not appreciate them according to their real worth, but paid special attention to one class in order to promote their selfish ends. ¶ *Because of advantage.* Because they hoped to derive some benefit to themselves.

17, 18. *But, beloved, remember ye, &c.* There is a striking similarity between these two verses and 2 Pet. iii. 1-3. It occurs in the same connection, following the description of the false and dangerous teachers against whom the apostle would guard them, and couched almost in the same words. See it explained in Notes on the similar passage in Peter. When Jude (ver. 17) entreats them to remember the words which were spoken by *the apostles*, it is not necessarily to be inferred that he was not himself an apostle, for he is speaking of what was past, and there might

should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate ^a themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building ^b up

^a He. 10. 25.

^b Col. 2. 7.

^c Ep. 6. 18.

^d Jn. 15. 3, 10.

^e Tit. 2. 13.

have been a special reason why he should refer to something that they would distinctly remember which had been spoken by the *other* apostles on this point. Or it might be that he meant also to include himself among them, and to speak of the apostles collectively, without particularly specifying himself. ¶ *Mockers*. The word rendered *mockers* here is the same which in the parallel place in 2 Pet. iii. 3 is rendered *scoffers*. Peter has stated more fully what was the particular subject on which they scoffed, and has shown that there was no occasion for it, 2 Pet. iii. 4, seq.

19. *These be they who separate themselves*. That is, from their brethren, and from the work of benevolence and truth. Comp. Rom. xvi. 17; Judg. v. 16, 23. ¶ *Sensual*. Under the influence of gross passions and appetites. ¶ *Having not the spirit*. The Holy Spirit, or the spirit of true religion.

20. *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith*. Comp. Notes on ver. 3. On the word *building*, see Notes on 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10; Eph. ii. 20. It is said here that they were to 'build up themselves'; that is, they were to act as moral and responsible agents in this, or were to put forth their own proper exertions to do it. Dependent, as we are, and as all persons with correct views will feel themselves to be, yet it is proper to endeavour to do the work of religion as if we had ample power of ourselves. See Notes, Phil. ii. 12. The phrase 'most holy faith' here refers to the system of religion which was founded on faith; and the meaning is, that they should seek to establish themselves most firmly in the belief of the doctrines, and in the practice of the duties of that system of religion. ¶ *Praying in the Holy Ghost*. See Notes. Eph. vi. 18.

yourselves on your most holy faith, praying ^c in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves ^d in the love of God, looking ^e for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference :

21. *Keep yourselves in the love of God*. Still adverting to their own agency. On the duty here enjoined, see Notes on John xv. 9. The phrase 'the love of God' *may* mean either God's love to us, or our love to him. The latter appears, however, to be the sense here, because it is not a subject which could be enjoined, that we should keep up *God's love to us*. That is a point over which we can have no control, except so far as it may be the result of our obedience; but we *may* be commanded to love him, and to keep ourselves in that love. ¶ *Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Particularly when he shall come to receive his people to himself. See Notes, Tit. ii. 13; 2 Pet. iii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 8.

22. *And of some have compassion*. This cannot be intended to teach that they were not to have compassion for all men, or to regard the salvation of all with solicitude, but that they were to have special and peculiar compassion for a certain class of persons, or were to approach them with feelings appropriate to their condition. The idea is, that the peculiar feeling to be manifest towards a certain class of persons in seeking their salvation was tender affection and kindness. They were to approach them in the gentlest manner, appealing to them by such words as *love* would prompt. Others were to be approached in a different manner, indicated by the phrase, 'save with fear.' The class here referred to, to whom *pity* (ἰλυσίς) was to be shown, and in whose conversion and salvation tender compassion was to be employed, appear to have been the timid, the gentle, the unwary; those who had not yet fallen into dangerous errors, but who might be exposed to them; those, for there are such, who would be more likely to be influenced by kind words and a gentle manner

23 And others save with fear, pulling ^a *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment ^b spotted by the flesh.

24 Now unto him ^c that is able

to keep ^d *you* from falling, and to present ^e *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

^a Ze.3.2-5.

^b Ro.3.4,18.

^c Ro.16.25-27.

^d 2 Ti.4.18.

^e Col.1.22.

than by denunciation. The direction then amounts to this, that while we are to seek to save all, we are to adapt ourselves wisely to the character and circumstances of those whom we seek to save. See Notes, 1 Cor. ix. 19-22. ¶ *Making a difference.* Making a distinction between them, not in regard to your *desires* for their salvation, or your *efforts* to save them, but to the *manner* in which it is done. To be able to do this is one of the highest qualifications to be sought by one who endeavours to save souls, and is indispensable for a good minister of the gospel. The young, the tender, the delicate, the refined, need a different kind of treatment from the rough, the uncultivated, the hardened. This wisdom was shown by the Saviour in all his preaching; it was eminent in the preaching of Paul.

23. *And others.* Another class; those who were of such a character, or in such circumstances, that a more bold, earnest, and determined manner would be better adapted to them. ¶ *Save with fear.* That is, by appeals adapted to produce fear. The idea seems to be that the arguments on which they relied were to be drawn from the dangers of the persons referred to, or from the dread of future wrath. It is undoubtedly true, that while there is a class of persons who can be won to embrace religion by mild and gentle persuasion, there is another class who can be aroused only by the terrors of the law. Every method is to be employed, in its proper place, that we 'by all means may save some.' ¶ *Pulling them out of the fire.* As you would snatch persons out of the fire; or as you would seize on a person that was walking into a volcano. Then, a man would not use the mild and gentle language of persuasion, but by word and gesture show that he was deeply in earnest. ¶ *Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.* The allusion here is not quite certain, though the idea

which the apostle meant to convey is not difficult to be understood. By 'the garment spotted by the flesh' there *may be* an allusion to a garment worn by one who had had the plague, or some offensive disease which might be communicated to others by touching even the clothing which they had worn. Or there may be an allusion to the ceremonial law of Moses, by which all those who came in contact with dead bodies were regarded as unclean, Lev. xxi. 11, Numb. vi. 6; ix. 6; xix. 11. Or there may be an allusion to the case mentioned in Lev. xv. 4, 10, 17; or perhaps to a case of leprosy. In all such instances, there would be the idea that the thing referred to by which the garment had been spotted was polluting, contagious, or loathsome, and that it was proper not even to touch such a garment, or to come in contact with it in any way. To something of this kind the apostle compares the sins of the persons here referred to. While the utmost effort was to be made to save them, they were in no way to partake of their sins; their conduct was to be regarded as loathsome and contagious; and those who attempted to save them were to take every precaution to preserve their own purity. There is much wisdom in this counsel. While we endeavour to save the *sinner*, we cannot too deeply loathe his *sins*; and in approaching some classes of sinners there is need of as much care to avoid being defiled by them, as there would be to escape the plague if we had any transaction with one who had it. Not a few have been deeply corrupted in their attempts to reform the polluted. There never could be, for example, too much circumspection and prayer for personal safety from pollution, in attempting to reform licentious and abandoned females.

24. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling.* This ascription to one who was able to keep them from falling is made in view of the facts ad-

25 To ^a the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty,

^a 1 Tim. i. 17.

dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

verted to in the epistle—the dangers of being led away by the arts and the example of these teachers of error. Comp. ver. 3. On the ascription itself, comp. Notes on Rom. xvi. 25–27. The phrase ‘to keep from falling’ means here to preserve from falling into sin, from yielding to temptation, and dishonouring their religion. The word used (*ἀπταίστους*) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means properly, *not stumbling* as of a horse; then *without falling into sin, blameless*. It is God only who, amidst the temptations of the world, can keep us from falling; but, blessed be his name, he can do it, and if we trust in him he will. — ¶ *And to present you faultless*. The word here rendered *faultless* is the same which is rendered *unblamable* in Col. i. 22. See the sentiment here expressed explained in the Notes on that passage. ¶ *Before the presence of his glory*. In his own glorious presence; before himself encompassed with glory in heaven. The saints are to be presented there as redeemed and sanctified, and as made worthy by grace to dwell there for ever. ¶ *With exceeding joy*. With the abounding joy that they are redeemed; that they are rescued from sorrow, sin, and death, and that heaven is to be their eternal home. Who now can form an adequate idea of the happiness of that hour?

25. *To the only wise God*. See Notes, Rom. xvi. 27; 1 Tim. i. 17. ¶ *Our Saviour*. The word *Saviour* may be appropriately applied to God as such, because he is the great Author of salvation, though it is commonly applied to

the Lord Jesus Christ. That it *may* have been designed that it should be applied here to the Lord Jesus no one can certainly deny, nor can it be demonstrated that it was; and in these circumstances, as all that is fairly implied in the language may be applied to God as such, it is most natural to give the phrase that interpretation. ¶ *Be glory and majesty*. Notes, 1 Tim. i. 17; Rom. xvi. 17. ¶ *Dominion and power*, &c. See Matt. vi. 13. It is common in the Scriptures to ascribe power, dominion, and glory to God, expressing the feeling that all that is great and good belongs to him, and the desire of the heart that he may reign in heaven and on earth. Comp. Rev. iv. 11; xix. 1. With the expression of such a desire it was not inappropriate that this epistle should be closed—and it is not inappropriate that this volume should be closed with the utterance of the same wish. In all our affections and aspirations, may God be supreme; in all the sin and woe which prevail here below, may we look forward with strong desire to the time when his dominion shall be set up over all the earth; in all our own sins and sorrows, be it ours to look onward to the time when in a purer and happier world his reign may be set up over our own souls, and when we may cast every crown at his feet and say, ‘Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.—Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God,’ Rev. iv. 11; xix. 1.